

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 DODE-00 IO-10 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 NIC-01

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O 180901Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8411

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 1028

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR KS KN

SUBJECT: FEB 15 EAST COAST BOAT INCIDENT

REF: A COMNAVFOR KOREA 150823Z FEB 75;

B COMNAVFOR KOREA 151241Z FEB 75

1. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF CURRENTLY KNOWN INFORMATIN (AND SOME INFORMED SPECULATION) ON THE INCIDENT IN WHICH THE ROK NAVY (ROKN) SANK A NORTH KOREAN BOAT ON 15 FEB (REFS A AND B).

2. AT 150410Z A ROK COASTAL RADAR DETECTED A CONTACT, WITHIN ROK TERRITORIAL WATERS, HEADED IN A GENERALLY SOUTHERLY DIRECTION. ROKN PCE-57 WAS DIRECTED TO APPROACH THE CONTACT NOW ABOUT 8 MILES SOUTH OF THE LINE AT APPROXIMATELY 0500Z THE CONTACT BEGAN TO FLEE TO THE NORTH. PCE-57 ATTEMPTED TO GET THE BOAT TO STOP FOR INSPECTION, FIRING WARNING SHOTS, BUT THE BOAT CONTINUED TO ATTEMPT TO FLEE. BECAUSE OF THE ACTION OF THIS SUSPICIOUS CRAFT IN ROK TERRITORIAL WATERS, PCE-57 DECLARED IT TO BE HOSITILE AND SUNK IT. THIS ACTION WAS IAW TO UNC RULES OF ENGAGEMENT. ONE SURVIVOR WAS RESCUED AND IS CURRENTLY BEING INTERROGATED.

3. IT IS APPARENT THAT THE BOAT WAS NORTH KOREAN WHICH
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LEADS TO SEVERAL POSSIBILITIES AS TO ITS NATURE AND THE PURPOSE OF ITS PRESENCE IN ROK TERRITORY. THE SPEED INDICATES IT PROBABLY WAS NOT A FISHING BOAT, AS WAS INDICATED BY INFORMATION FROM SOME NORTH KOREAN UNITS

IN THE AREA. THE TIME OF DAY AND LOCATION INDICATE IT WAS NOT AN AGENT BOAT. OUR VIEW IS THAT IT MOST PROBABLY WAS A PARA MILITARY PATROL BOAT, BUT THE QUESTION OF HOW IT STRAYED SO FAR SOUTH REMAINS, SINCE VISIBILITY WAS GOOD AND THE ENGINES OBVIOUSLY WERE OPERATING.

4. THERE WAS SOME NORTH KOREAN MILITARY REACTION TO THE INCIDENT BUT IT WAS VERY LOW-KEY AND DEFENSIVE IN NATURE. TWO NORTH KOREAN PATROL BOATS WERE LOCATED JUST NORTH OF THE EXTENSION OF THE MDL, BUT DID NOT ATTEMPT TO INTERFERE. THE NORTH KOREAN AIR ACTIVITY IN THE AREA NORTH OF THE LOCATION INDICATED READINESS, BUT NO ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO INTERFERE.

5. THE NORTH KOREANS HAVE REQUESTED A MILITARY ARMISTICE COMMISSION MEETING TO DISCUSS THE RETURN OF SURVIVORS (SEPTTEL). THE MEETING IS CURRENTLY SCHEDULED FOR 21 FEB 75.
SNEIDER

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Message Attributes

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Concepts: NAVAL SHIPS, TERRITORIAL WATERS VIOLATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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ISecure: 1
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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